

RAFEEF ZIADAH

SHADES OF ANGER

Allow me to speak my Arab tongue
before they occupy my language as well.
Allow me to speak my mother tongue
before they colonise her memory as well.

I am an Arab woman of color.
and we come in all shades of anger.
All my grandfather ever wanted to do
was wake up at dawn and watch my grandmather
kneel and pray
in a village hidden between Jaffa and Haifa
my mother was born under an olive tree
on a soil they say is no longer mine
but I will cross their barriers, their check points
their damn apartheid walls and return to my homeland

I am an Arab woman of colour and we come in all shades of anger.
And did you hear my sister screaming yesterday
as she gave birth at a check point
with Israeli soldiers looking between her legs
for their next demographic threat
called her baby girl "Janeen".
And did you hear Amni Mona screaming
behind their prison bars as they teargassed her cell
"We're returning to Palestine!"

I am an Arab woman of colour and we come in all shades of anger.
But you tell me, this womb inside me
will only bring you your next terrorist
beard wearing, gun waving, towelhead, sand nigger
You tell me, I send my children out to die
but those are your copters, your F16's in our sky
And let's talk about this terrorism business for a second
Wasn't it the CIA that killed Allende and Lumumba
and who trained Osama in the first place
My grandparents didn't run around like clowns
with the white capes and the white hoods on their heads
lynching black people

I am an Arab woman of colour and we come in all shades of anger.
"So who is that brown woman screaming in the demonstration?"
Sorry, should I not scream?

I forgot to be your every orientalist dream
Jinnee in a bottle, belly dancer, harem girl, soft spoken Arab woman
Yes master, no master.
Thank you for the peanut butter sandwiches
raining down on us from your F16's master
Yes my liberators are here to kill my children
and call them "collateral damage"

I am an Arab woman of colour and we come in all shades of anger.

So let me just tell you this womb inside me

will only bring you your next rebel

She will have a rock in one hand and a Palestinian flag in the other

I am an Arab woman of color

Beware! Beware my anger...
